

## A Bit of History

As several individuals and editors have recently referred to Mr. Bryan's change from Clark to Wilson in the Baltimore Convention, it may not be out of place to recall the material facts in order that those who desire to discuss the matter may do so intelligently.

First, Mr. Bryan was under no special obligation to Mr. Clark, personal or political, other than that imposed by the instructions voted at the Democratic primary in Nebraska. He had known Mr. Clark personally and been associated with him politically since 1893, the date of Mr. Clark's entrance into Congress, but the personal acquaintance was not more intimate than that which existed between Mr. Bryan and thousands of other Democrats. The same can be said of their political association. As Mr. Clark was a candidate for Congress in each of Mr. Bryan's campaigns his own success was identified with Mr. Bryan's success. At their first meeting Mr. Clark referred to the fact that he had used in his campaign against a one term Congressman the prominence that Mr. Bryan had secured in a single term.

Second, in the spring of 1911 Mr. Bryan thought Mr. Clark the most available man in sight for the Democratic nomination in 1912, and, with the purpose of showing his friendship for him, invited him to be the chief speaker at the Bryan Birthday Dinner. Mr. Bryan, as the last presidential candidate, was the acknowledged leader of the party and Mr. Clark's presence was not calculated to do the latter harm. As time went on Mr. Wilson, then governor, made speeches which indicated progressiveness. He opposed Senator Smith for the United States Senate, advocated the initiative and referendum, and denounced the money trust. Mr. Bryan on reading these speeches announced that Mr. Wilson ought to be included in the list of availables but never in public or private advocated either as against the other or any other candidate as against either.

Third, Mr. Bryan contributed to the strength of both Mr. Clark and Mr. Wilson by opposing Judge Harmon on the ground that he was a reactionary and later by opposing Congressman Underwood on the ground that he was second choice of the Harmon following.

Fourth, Mr. Bryan was a candidate for delegate in Nebraska on a platform declaring neutrality between Mr. Clark and Mr. Wilson but announcing that he would resign his commission as a delegate in case the state instructed for Judge Harmon, his objection to Judge Harmon being that he was the choice of the Wall Street element of the party and Mr. Bryan was not willing to join those who wanted to turn the party over to Wall Street leadership. Mr. Bryan led the ticket by several thousand and a large majority of the delegation shared his views.

Fifth, Mr. Bryan did not vote at the primary but requested two others living at his home to divide their vote, giving one to Mr. Clark and one to Mr. Wilson.

Sixth, Mr. Clark's supporters made their fight in the Nebraska primary for Mr. Clark and against Mr. Wilson on the ground that Mr. Clark was a better friend of Mr. Bryan's than Mr. Wilson was, and gave prominence to the "cocked hat" letter and other criticisms which Mr. Wilson had made against Mr. Bryan before the former became governor of New Jersey.

Seventh, several weeks before the Baltimore Convention Mr. Bryan wrote to Mr. Wilson suggesting that he (Mr. Wilson) consent to Ollie James acting as temporary chairman, explaining that while Mr. James was Mr. Clark's choice he was a progressive democrat and that Mr. Clark, having the larger number of instructed delegates, might fairly claim the right to name the chairman.

Eighth, the telegram sent by Mr. Bryan from Chicago to the candidates, criticising Judge Parker's selection by the Committee and offering to aid the candidates to defeat Mr. Parker, was sent to both Mr. Clark and Mr. Wilson. Mr. Clark's answer was ambiguous; Mr. Wilson endorsed Mr. Bryan's position.

Ninth, when Mr. Bryan found that Mr. Parker would not withdraw he asked Ollie James (Mr. Clark's candidate for chairman in the contest before the committee) to allow his name to be presented by Mr. Bryan against Mr. Parker, but Mr. James declined on the ground that Mr. Clark's managers objected. Mr. Bryan afterwards asked Judge O'Gorman and Senator Kern

to allow their names to be presented and only consented to his own name being presented when no other prominent delegate could be found who was willing to be a candidate against Mr. Parker.

Tenth, Mr. Clark's managers supported Mr. Parker for the position of Temporary Chairman as against Mr. Bryan.

Eleventh, many if not a majority of Mr. Clark's managers voted against the Morgan-Belmont-Ryan resolution introduced by Mr. Bryan—a resolution adopted by a vote of more than four to one, even the New York delegation voting for it.

Twelfth, when the New York delegation was thrown to Mr. Clark Mr. Bryan resolved not to aid the New York delegation to nominate any candidate, believing then (and still believing) that a Democratic candidate owing his nomination to the New York delegation would be defeated at the polls. Mr. Bryan had attended the Chicago Convention where Mr. Taft had been nominated by the Wall Street influences and he introduced the Morgan-Belmont-Ryan resolution because he was convinced that the same crowd was attempting to control the Baltimore Convention. But Mr. Bryan continued to vote for Mr. Clark under the instructions hoping all the time that the New York delegation would withdraw its vote from Clark and leave him to make his fight with the support of progressive delegates.

Thirteenth, on Saturday morning a number of the Nebraska delegation refused to vote longer for Mr. Clark. Mr. Bryan tried to persuade them to continue to support Mr. Clark, assuring them that he would change if it became apparent that his vote would help New York name the candidate, but still hoping that New York would leave Clark. Finding several of the Nebraska delegates obstinate and knowing that the necessity for a change might come unexpectedly, Mr. Bryan prepared, before leaving the hotel, an explanation of his change which he afterwards read in the Convention.

Fourteenth, soon after the convention opened on Saturday morning a situation arose which led Mr. Bryan to believe that he could carry out what he knew to be the desire of the Nebraska Democrats, by changing his vote to Mr. Wilson rather than by taking any further chance of helping New York to nominate a candidate. When a poll of the delegation was demanded he took the platform and read his reasons for changing his vote, stating specifically that he would withdraw his vote from Mr. Wilson if New York voted for Wilson.

The statement contained no criticism of Mr. Clark but was based solely upon the belief entertained then and still entertained that under the conditions then existing the Democratic party could not afford to go into the campaign with a candidate, no matter who he was, who would have to bear the odium of having been selected so largely through the influence of the New York delegation, controlled as that delegation was by one man who worked in harmony with the three financiers whom the convention had specifically denounced. The Missouri delegation containing all the prominent Democrats in the state, sat just in front of the platform and none of them asked any question although Mr. Bryan announced his willingness to answer questions.

Fifteenth, the Nebraska Democratic state convention, held after the Baltimore convention, endorsed Mr. Bryan's course at Baltimore.

The above facts are submitted as proof that Mr. Bryan kept the pledge that he made to the Democrats of Nebraska when they selected him as a delegate; their endorsement of his course in changing his vote when conditions made the change necessary ought to be a sufficient answer to critics. A delegate to a National Convention is under obligation to those who selected him rather than to the candidate whom he supports or the candidate's friends. Mr. Bryan believed then that he was acting in the interest of the Democrats of the nation as well as in the interest of the Democrats of Nebraska and he still entertains this belief. It was no reflection upon Mr. Clark because Mr. Bryan would have taken the same course had he been supporting any other candidate and New York had attempted to make that candidate the choice of the party. He was not willing to allow a Wall Street-controlled delegation from New York to wreck the chances of the Democratic party. Mr. Bryan's protest against Parker aroused the country and outside pressure compelled the nomination of Mr. Wilson. The telegraph companies estimated the number of telegrams received by the delegates at ONE HUNDRED AND TEN

### THE ROLL OF HONOR

States That Have Ratified the National Woman Suffrage Amendment

- 1—WISCONSIN, June 10, 1919.
- 2—ILLINOIS, June 10, 1919.
- 3—MICHIGAN, June 10, 1919.
- 4—KANSAS, June 16, 1919.
- 5—OHIO, June 16, 1919.
- 6—NEW YORK, June 16, 1919.
- 7—PENNSYLVANIA, June 24, 1919.
- 8—MASSACHUSETTS, June 25, 1919.
- 9—TEXAS, June 28, 1919.
- 10—IOWA, July 2, 1919.
- 11—MISSOURI, July 3, 1919.
- 12—ARKANSAS, July 28, 1919.
- 13—MONTANA, July 30, 1919.
- 14—NEBRASKA, August 2, 1919.
- 15—MINNESOTA, Sept. 8, 1919.
- 16—NEW HAMPSHIRE, Sept. 10, 1919.
- 17—UTAH, Sept. 30, 1919.
- 18—CALIFORNIA, Nov. 1, 1919.
- 19—MAINE, Nov. 5, 1919.
- 20—NORTH DAKOTA, Dec. 1, 1919.
- 21—SOUTH DAKOTA, Dec. 4, 1919.
- 22—COLORADO, Dec. 12, 1919.
- 23—RHODE ISLAND, Jan. 6, 1920.
- 24—KENTUCKY, Jan. 6, 1920.
- 25—OREGON, Jan. 13, 1920.
- 26—INDIANA, Jan. 16, 1920.
- 27—WYOMING, Jan. 27, 1920.
- 28—NEVADA, Feb. 7, 1920.
- 29—NEW JERSEY, FEB. 9, 1920.

THOUSAND. Mr. Bryan received ELEVEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOUR with an average of three names to a telegram.

### RAISING THE BLACK FLAG

Answering an inquiry as to the New York dinner given to Chairman Cummings, Mr. Bryan said: "Who will now accuse me of doing injustice to Mr. Cummings? He shows no interest in the Democratic party; his chief business seems to be to act as a sounding board for the champions of the liquor traffic. He lends official sanction to the program of a criminal business which has been outlawed by the conscience of the nation. Governor Edwards and Governor Smith, both of whom owe their election to a lawless business which conspires against public morals, have entered upon the task of burying the Democratic party in the grave with the saloon. If their fight rests upon their individual merits, it will be a farce; if the brewers and distillers finance it, the pre-convention campaign will make the Newberry campaign look like a Sunday School picnic. It is fortunate for the country that Edwards and Smith have raised the black flag early—both parties will be warned. Who will be the Edwards and Smith of the Republican party, or is our party the only one to be disgraced?"

### GREY'S HELPING HAND

Viscount Grey's letter ought to hasten ratification. If Great Britain is willing to accept any reservations this country wants, why should senators quarrel so long? Why not get together and ratify at once?

### MR. HOOVER'S STATEMENT.

Mr. Hoover's statement appears in the morning papers just as The Commoner goes to press. It is a very frank confession of confusion of thought and lack of interest in public questions. He does not know yet with which party he will act this fall. He will carefully examine the platforms when written and support the party which comes nearest to his views. That might seem very sensible policy for one who felt himself so insignificant a factor that he could not influence any party's action, but can a man big enough for the presidency be content to do nothing to influence party action in a crisis like this if he waits until parties act? He must choose between the parties even though neither pleases him. Can't he help some party to make a good platform and take the right stand? He might make enemies, of course, but it is worth while to make enemies if one can by doing so serve his country. Is Mr. Hoover interested enough in politics to render some service or just interested enough to wait for an honor to be conferred upon him—the greatest honor in the world?

W. J. BRYAN.